

The Interview

As noted, the Examiner (with her SPE in attendance) granted and gave a telephonic interview to Applicants' representative on July 15, 2008. Applicants sincerely appreciate the opportunity to meet with the Examiner and appreciate her comments regarding this case.

The Dannstrom and Yamamori cases were discussed and although no agreement regarding the claims was reached, the Examiner seemed to be generally receptive to the points made by Applicants' representative.

Regarding Dannstrom, it was pointed out that the membrane tubes are potted and that potting of the tubes would not be combined with using a manifold to hold the ends of the tubes, as set forth in claim 1. The Examiner agreed that tubes would not be both potted and manifolded and that these two approaches were not compatible. It was further pointed out that Dannstrom only taught a pressure of operation of about 145 psi rather than 1,200 psi, as set forth in claim 10 of the application.

Regarding Yamamori, Applicants' representative characterized the Yamamori reference as teaching fixed manifold ends rather than permitting axial movement. The abstract states that the ends are fixed and figure 11 shows fixed ends. The Examiner agreed that Yamamori appeared to teach a fixed-end approach, but gave no indication of allowability.